DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 425 358 CE 077 801

TITLE	Review of Enterprise Florida Jobs and Education Partnership. Report No. 95-16.
INSTITUTION	Florida State Legislature, Tallahassee. Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.
PUB DATE	1995-12-19
NOTE	6p.
AVAILABLE FROM	OPPAGA Report Production, P.O. Box 1735, Tallahassee, FL 32302; Tel: 850-488-0021; Tel: 800-531-2477 (Toll-Free); Fax: 850-487-3804; Web site: http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Cooperative Programs; *Education Work Relationship; *Employment Programs; Institutional Cooperation; *Job Training; *Partnerships in Education; Postsecondary Education; Program Evaluation; School Business Relationship; Secondary Education; *State Programs
IDENTIFIERS	Florida

ABSTRACT

The Enterprise Florida Jobs and Education Partnership was developed to create and maintain a highly skilled work force able to respond to rapidly changing technology and market opportunities essential to a competitive Florida economy. A review of the partnership found the following: (1) the partnership has adopted a research design as required by statute, although outcome measures were developed for only three of its goals; (2) the partnership is coordinating with the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program to obtain data for evaluating the program's outcomes; (3) the partnership has carried out various activities in coordinating and overseeing state work force training programs, such as development and oversight for the Performance-based Incentive Funding Program and coordinating efforts to identify occupations that are in demand in Florida's economy and related job training programs designed to prepare individuals for these occupations; and (4) it is still too early to determine if these activities will translate into improved outcomes for the disadvantaged. The following recommendations were made: develop outcome measures to evaluate the achievement of all its statutory goals; ensure the availability of all data needed to evaluate job training programs; coordinate with other agencies that administer work force development programs; and develop a system for monitoring performance of community colleges and school districts to ensure that partnership funds are used for maximum benefit. (KC)

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STATE OF FLORIDA

Report No. 95-16

Office of
Program Policy Analysis
And Government Accountability

James L. Carpenter
Interim Director

December 19, 1995

REVIEW OF ENTERPRISE FLORIDA JOBS AND EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

PURPOSE OF REVIEW

The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) conducted this review of the Enterprise Florida Jobs and Education Partnership (the Partnership) pursuant to s. 288.0475(10), F.S. [1] The Partnership is statutorily required to develop a research design that provides for a quantitative evaluation of its performance. The objectives of our review were to evaluate the Partnership using its research design and report on its implementation and progress in achieving statutory goals.

[1] The Office of the Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability is a unit of the Office of the Auditor General, but operates independently and reports to the Legislature.

BACKGROUND

The Legislature established the Enterprise Florida Jobs and Education Partnership in 1994 as an affiliate of Enterprise Florida, Inc. Enterprise Florida, Inc. focuses on creating higher-paying jobs through technology innovation and capital formation. (See Reports No. 95-07, 95-08, and 95-09.) The purpose of the Partnership is to create and maintain a highly-skilled workforce able to respond to rapidly changing technology and market opportunities essential to a competitive Florida economy. The Legislature established the following goals for the Partnership:

- Provide for a skilled workforce to enable Florida to compete in a global economy;
- Respond to changes in technology and to emerging industries;
- Promote the development of market-driven programs identified in the Occupational Forecasting Conference (s. 216.136, F.S.);
- Base evaluation of success on student and participant outcomes rather than processes;
- Coordinate state, federal, local, and private funds for maximum impact; and
- Encourage the training of disadvantaged groups such as those with disabilities, economic disadvantages, dislocated workers, and public assistance recipients.

The Partnership is to accomplish these goals by coordinating and overseeing approximately 48 state workforce training programs. The Partnership does not directly administer state workforce training programs; the vast majority are administered by: the Department of Education through postsecondary vocational training programs offered by school districts and community colleges; the Department of Labor and Employment Security's training programs for individuals who have difficulty obtaining gainful employment due to various social, economic, or physical disabilities; and the Department of Commerce's Quick Response Training Program designed to meet short-term training needs of new and expanding companies.

The Partnership is also responsible for developing and overseeing the implementation of a program to provide financial incentives to postsecondary vocational training programs that are successful in improving student outcomes. Enterprise Florida's Strategic Plan for 1993-94 indicates that the key to the Partnership's success will be the establishment of performance-based training that will support the high-skill, high-wage industries necessary to achieve Enterprise Florida's mission.

The Partnership is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board appointed a president effective September 15, 1995. In 1995-96, the Legislature appropriated $226,892 for the administration of the Partnership. Funds were expended for two full-time employees and to support Board activities. [2] The Legislature

also allocated $30 million of existing job training funds to provide incentives for community colleges and school districts to improve student outcomes.

[2] In 1994-95, the Legislature did not appropriate funds for the administration of the Jobs and Education Partnership. However, Enterprise Florida transferred $208,307 from the Innovation Partnership to cover its administrative costs.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The Partnership Has Adopted a Research Design as Required by Statute. The Partnership also Developed Performance Measures for Its Six Statutory Goals. However, Outcome Measures Were Developed for Only Three of the Goals. In Addition, Baselines and Expected Future Performance Levels Were Not Identified for All Outcome Measures.

The Partnership adopted its research design in August 1994 after consulting with OPPAGA. In its research design, the Partnership developed performance measures for each of its six statutory goals. However, the Partnership specified outcome measures for evaluating the achievement of only three of its statutory goals, (i.e., promoting market-driven workforce training, evaluating the success of training programs on the basis of student outcomes, and encouraging the participation of target populations). (See Exhibit 1.) Examples of outcome measures developed by the Partnership are placement rates of completers of training programs and Department of Labor and Employment Security job training programs; wages of training completers one and two years after placement in instruction-related jobs; and the proportion of program completers who receive public assistance. The Partnership needs to develop outcome measures for all of its goals to evaluate its performance.

Exhibit 1: Performance Measures for Partnership Goals

	Performance Measures		
Partnership Goals	Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes
• Providing for a Skilled Workforce	✓	✓	
• Responding to Technology Changes		✓	
• Encouraging Development of Market-Driven Programs	✓	✓	✓
• Basing Success on Outcomes	✓	✓	✓
• Coordinating Training Funds	✓		
• Encouraging Target Group Participation		✓	✓

Source: Jobs and Education Partnership Research Design.

The Partnership has also developed baseline measures, expected levels of future performance, and timeframes for accomplishment for some of the outcome measures. (See Exhibit 2.) Baseline measures are necessary in order for a program to evaluate changes in performance that occur from one year to the next. Expected performance levels and timeframes provide decision-makers with criteria to judge program success.

Exhibit 2: Baselines, Future Performance Levels, and Timeframes for Outcome Measures

Outcome Measures	Baselines	Future Performance Levels	Timeframes
• Placement Rates	✓	✓	✓
• Wages at Placement	✓	✓	✓
• Wages 1 & 2 Years After Placement	✓		
• Completers On Public Assistance			
• Productivity (All Student Outcomes)	✓	✓	✓
• Employer Satisfaction	✓		

Source: Jobs and Education Partnership Research Design.

The Partnership's baseline measures for placement rates and wages are based on the Department of Education's Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) data on individuals who completed postsecondary vocational and job training programs in 1992-93. Expected future performance levels and timeframes include a 3% per year increase in placement rates beginning in fiscal year 1995-96. Further, after three years of operation, the Partnership expects a 15% increase in wages at placement and a 30% increase in productivity, which is a composite of all student outcomes. The Partnership is planning to use wage data collected annually by FETPIP for the period of October through December.

IMPLEMENTATION AND RESULTS

Data Is Not Yet Available to Evaluate the Partnership's Performance Using Its Outcome Measures. However, the Partnership Is Coordinating With the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) to Obtain Data for Evaluating These Outcomes. FETPIP Has Also Collected Data That Assisted the Partnership in Establishing Baselines and Timeframes for Expected Future Performance.

Because data is not yet available, we cannot evaluate the outcomes reported in the Partnership's research design. The Partnership is coordinating with FETPIP to obtain data for evaluating these outcomes. FETPIP compiles data annually on individuals who complete vocational and job training programs including placement rates, percent receiving welfare, and wages earned during the quarter ending in December. Outcome data for 1994-95 program participants will not be available until FETPIP compiles wage and public assistance data for October through December 1995.

The Partnership can also use the FETPIP data to establish additional baseline measures. For example, the Partnership has not established baseline measures or expected performance levels for its goal of reducing the level of dependence on public assistance. FETPIP follow-up data on 1993-94 completers of vocational education programs and those placed by employment assistance programs showed the percentage who received public assistance in the fourth quarter of 1994 varied by program, ranging from 4% for community colleges degree programs to 74% for Project Independence. This baseline data will assist the Partnership in evaluating the extent to which participation in employment training programs reduces dependence on public assistance.

The Partnership Has Carried Out Various Activities in Coordinating and Overseeing State Workforce Training Programs. It Developed and Provided Oversight for the Performance-Based Incentive Funding (PBIF) Program. It Also Coordinated Efforts to Identify Occupations That Are in Demand in Florida's Economy and Related Job Training Programs Designed to Prepare Individuals for These Occupations.

Since its creation, the Partnership has carried out various activities in achieving its goal of coordinating and overseeing state workforce training programs. The Partnership developed and coordinated the implementation of the Performance-Based Incentive Funding Program (PBIF) which is designed to improve public vocational training programs. As a result of the Partnership's efforts, 20 of 28 community colleges and 19 school districts participated in the PBIF Program in fiscal years 1994-95 and 1995-96. [3]

Preliminary data reported by community colleges and school districts indicate that the Partnership's PBIF Program may be producing some positive short-term results. Based on information reported through October 1995, enrollments of disadvantaged students in training programs who qualify for performance-based incentives increased 47%, from 29,235 in 1993-94 to 42,869 as of October 1995. Increased enrollments may be partially attributed to improved reporting by community colleges and school districts since fiscal year 1994-95 was the first year the PBIF Program provided incentive awards for enrollments of disadvantaged students.

The Partnership also coordinated with the Occupational Forecasting Conference, Department of Education, and Department of Commerce to identify occupations that are in demand in Florida's economy and vocational training programs designed to prepare people for these occupations. The criteria for a market-demand occupation is a minimum of fifty job openings statewide and with opportunities for full-time employment and a minimum entry wage of $7.00 per hour in 1994-95 increased to $7.50 in 1995-96. After the Occupational Forecasting Conference identifies market-demand occupations, the Partnership approves the occupations that qualify for the PBIF Program. In 1994-95, the Partnership approved 122 occupations for performance incentives and identified 173 public vocational training programs that prepare students for these occupations. In 1995-96, the Partnership approved 152 occupations and identified 242 vocational training programs that prepared students for these occupations. The PBIF Program awarded community colleges and school districts approximately $3.5 million for performance incentives for training students for market-demand occupations in 1994-95.

[3] Of the 67 school districts in the state, 29 have one or more vocational training centers; 17 of these elected to participate in the PBIF Program. In addition, 2 school districts that do not have vocational training centers are participating in the Program based on outcomes from employment training in their adult education programs.

OBSERVATIONS

- Although PBIF Program outcomes show improved performance in serving disadvantaged groups, it is still too early to make conclusive judgments as to whether this progress will translate into improved outcomes for the disadvantaged. Since some training programs take as much as two years to complete, it will be several more years before outcomes (such as becoming more financially self-sufficient or less reliant on public assistance) can be validly assessed.

- Although the Partnership's research design did not include strategies for identifying and eliminating poor performing programs, the Partnership has begun to address these issues in its redesign of the state's workforce delivery system. The Partnership

plans to evaluate employment outcomes annually by service delivery area and report on the overall performance of each area. In its November 1995 meeting, the Partnership established 22 workforce delivery areas for the state and will require each to apply for a charter to provide workforce development programs. Beginning at the end of fiscal year 1995-96, the Partnership will identify poor performing service delivery areas and will require workforce development boards to develop and implement diagnostic procedures for improving outcomes. If performance does not increase within a specified timeframe, the Partnership will revoke the charter. However, the Partnership has not yet developed consistent measures that are needed to evaluate the state's workforce development programs. The various employment training programs currently have different definitions of performance measures such as program completion and job placement. Consistent performance measures are essential for valid outcomes.

- In Report No. 94-41, issued March 1995, we noted that since the Partnership's PBIF Program is designed to pay incentives only when outcomes are confirmed, it is possible that earning incentive dollars could take two to three years. We also cautioned that this could place JTPA funds allocated, but not expended for incentives, at risk of reverting back to the federal government. This scenario occurred in 1994-95 when the PBIF Program expended only $1 million of the $17 million in JTPA Title III funds for dislocated workers. Unexpended Title III funds exceed the federal limit that the state can carry funds forward to the next fiscal year. Consequently, next year's allocations will be reduced by $3.8 million.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Partnership:

- Develop outcome measures to evaluate the achievement of all of its statutory goals and baseline measures, expected levels of future performance, and timeframes for accomplishment so it can provide the Legislature with the information necessary for making informed decisions regarding expenditure of state training funds;

- Ensure the availability of all data needed to evaluate job training programs;

- Coordinate with FETPIP and agencies that administer workforce development programs to establish a system for evaluating job training programs and criteria for acceptable levels of performance. The system should provide a mechanism for evaluating all major employment training programs and for eliminating poor performing programs. The Partnership needs to develop consistent performance measures for valid comparisons of outcomes across programs; and

- Develop a system for monitoring performance of community colleges and school districts to ensure that PBIF Program funds are used for maximum benefit.

ENTERPRISE FLORIDA JOBS AND EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP RESPONSE

The President of Enterprise Florida Jobs and Education Partnership, in his written response to our review, indicated that:

"We are in overall agreement with the findings and recommendations of the report, and will work with your office in refining the baselines and performance measures in our research design.

"We are very proud of the accomplishments of the Jobs and Education Partnership during its first year of operations. Refining the local validation and review of the occupational forecasting data, and utilizing that as a foundation for the Performance Based Incentive Funding program, occupied much of the fiscal year. However, the Partnership was also engaged in other important activities. These included a review of the organizational structure of the Florida Departments of Commerce and Labor Employment Security, and a CEO consultation. The Commerce and Labor review contributed to our future work in the redesign of Florida's Workforce Development System. The CEO consultation, co-hosted by Commissioner Frank Brogan and Chairman Schultz, brought together the chief executive officers from the largest corporations in Florida. The CEOs identified those attributes that make entry level employees successful in their businesses. The consultation resulted in strategies to incorporate these essential competencies into our public school curriculum."

This review was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards and included appropriate performance auditing and evaluation methods. Copies of this report may be obtained by contacting Report Production at (904) 488-0021 or SC 278-0021.

Review Supervised by: Jane Fletcher

Review Conducted by: Dennis Gray